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FAGOTS OF CEDAR

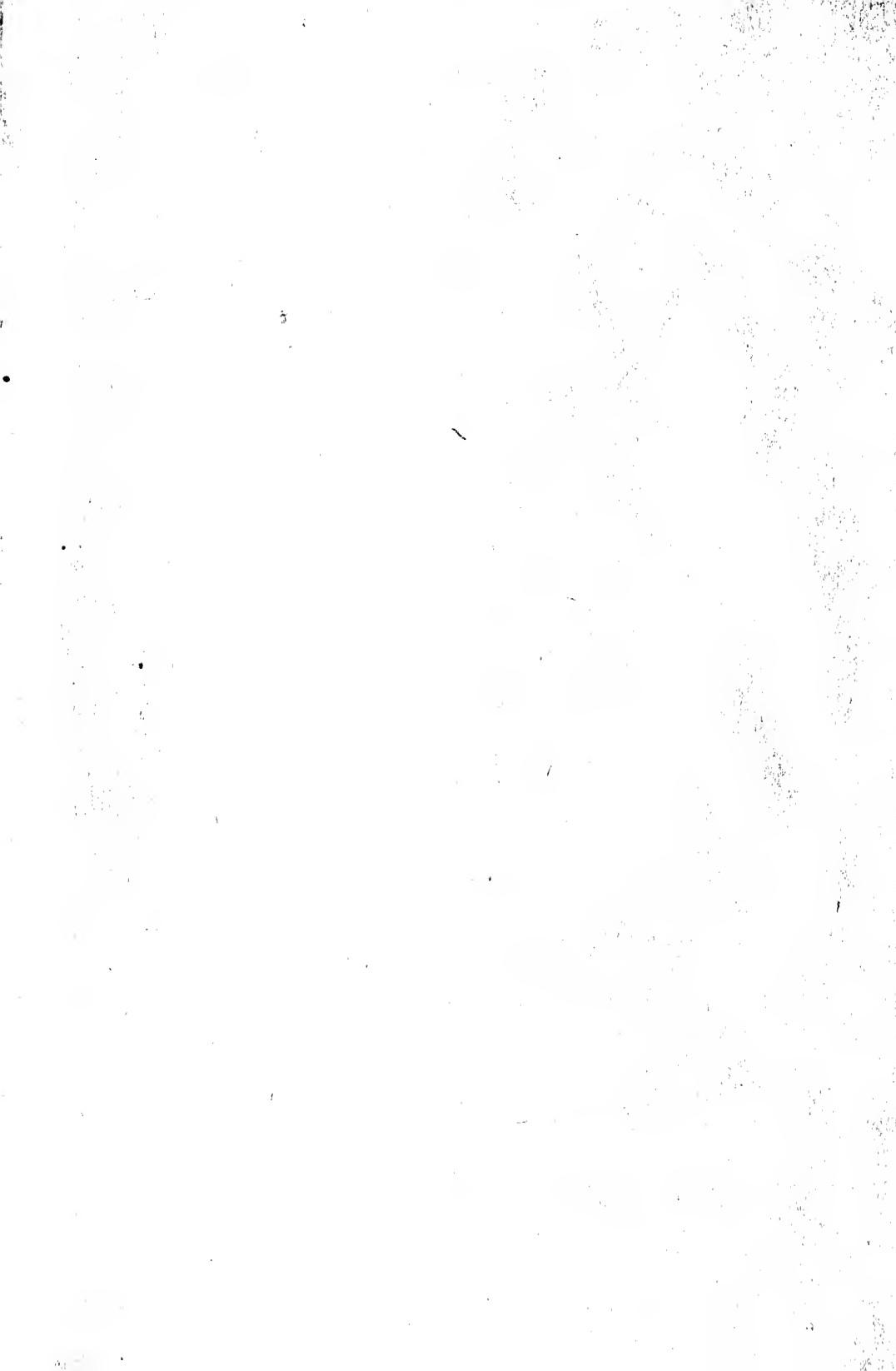
IVAN SWIFT



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THE MICHIGAN
ADVENTURE

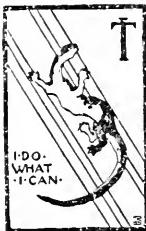


IN MICHIGAN

FAGOTS OF CEDAR

OUT OF THE NORTH &
BLOWN BY THE WINDS
& ASHES AND EMBERS

By IVAN SWIFT



From THE LIZZARD SHOP at
HARBOR SPRINGS Little Traverse Bay MICHIGAN

M CM IX

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By IVAN SWIFT

DEDICATED TO THE BEAUTY OF OLD
TRADITION AND THE PROMISE
OF NEW DEMOCRACY

FOR the privilege of printing these verses
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THE INDEPENDENT, THE OUTLOOK, SUN-
SET, RECREATION, OUTERS' BOOK, FIELD
AND STREAM, THE MIDLAND, AMERICAN
LUMBERMAN, THE COMRADE and *Chicago*
Examiner, in which together, most of the
titles originally appeared.

C O N T E N T S

- A Swallow on a Telegraph-wire*
IN MICHIGAN
Home
Song of the Cedar-maker
Stage of the Woods
The Old Courier-de-Bois
The Timber Wolves
Gods of the Ki-jik-on
Plaint of the Brook-trout
The Pleasure of the Hour
The Woodman to the River
Sprite of the Po-tog-on-og
Seal of the North
The Way of the North
De Fishair of de Sish-ca-wet
In Wild Americay
Crime of Land
Robbins'-Sidin' Farm
Sunset of My Years
Horse of Pete Lareau
Wage of the Wilsons
Assassination of the King
Pictures Up in Readmond
If I were Pan
Along the Harbor Shore
To a Grosbeak in the Garden
The Humming-bird
Autumn

The Sun Sets Cold
The Coprid Beetle
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Repair
Heredity
The Absent Heart of Me
My Heart is Home
The Poet's Shift
Unto the Least
The Poet Vagant
The Larger Dream

*A SWALLOW ON A
TELEGRAPH
WIRE*

*BATHED in red sun and gladdened by
the wind*

*A swallow sat upon a span of wire.
He chirped the hours away with idle mind
And preened the feathers of his staid attire.*

*The news of all the world ran through his
feet—*

*The word of birth and sound of wedding-
bells;*

*The cry of pain and laughter of the street,
Earth's sorrow and the sin that life compels.*

*Whether the message were of ill or good,
A moment's joy or grieving bitter-long;
Of blatant clamouring or solitude—
The swallow shot to earth the one glad song.*

*So might I share the swallow's faithful
heart,*

*And know the shadow and the light of life—
I'd go on singing through the busy mart,
And find a symphony in mortal strife.*

O u t *o f* t h e N o r t h

I N M I C H I G A N

SLOW-YIELDING Nymphs
Evade unpandered Satyrs here,
And sands unconquered laugh at man's
invention;
Bright clouds drive darker shadows,
And the bay-breeze bears heavy odors—
Odor-offerings of ragged pine
And spruce.

The white-birch single on the hillside,
The hemlocks and I
Are friends
In Michigan.

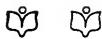
Nature's fingers
Seem to play upon my strings
In minor harmonies up here—
Where shells of convents shelter
Echoes only,
And the last Indian has laid
His flints and legends
On the grave-mound of the older time
In Michigan.

H O M E

IN the evening after the rain,
At home with the North and the trees,
I turn from the world again
And find me a world in these.

I searched for a joy in the lands
Of castle and kopje and sun,
And found what I sought—in the sands
Where the journey was lightly begun.

The glories of continents seen
And all that my ears have heard,
Are lost in a garden's green
And the chirp of a nested bird.



SONG OF THE CEDAR-MAKER

DEEP is the wall of the cedar,
And tough is the take of the Jack;
But a man with a girl must feed her,
And the fire must burn in the shack.

*Ax, spud, saw, steel!
Trim, mark, cut, peel!*

We tackled the world and shook her—
A wench with an eye for hate;
We winked at the woods—and took her,
For better and bunk and plate.

CHO.

Man is a thing for labor,
Or what's the game of the trees?
The saw is as good as the saber,
And tallies are made with these—

CHO.

Our talk ain't the regular Latin—
But we cut to the cedar's core!
Our manner 'll stand some battin'—
But we pay for our beans and more!

CHO.

Tough is the take of the cedar,
And rough is the lift of the Jack;
But a man with a wife must feed her,
And the kettle must boil in the shack.

CHO.

Continued

A *chew* for the church and the nation!

We *work*—and the scale is right;
Sweat be our soul's salvation,

And *freedom* is *Saturday night!*

Whack, crack, chip, strip!

Zim, zow, zip, zip!

Ax, spud, saw, steel!

CHOP! MARK! CUT! PEEL!

CAMP KI-JIK, 1907



STAGE OF THE WOODS

THE glow of the moon's low rim
Creeps up through the trees to the sky;
And the night is a deep, sweet hymn
To the lone doe sauntering by.

A frail, lithe shape at the spring—
A quick, strange flash in the night!
A leap and a keen, hot sting!
And Death walks weird in the light.

THE OLD COURIER-DE-BOIS

A COMMON man was Pere Gilbault,"

So will the townsmen say,

"A sodden leaf left by the snow

Upon the summer way;—

"A relic of the older time,

He crooned of moldy years,

Unknown to fame of good or crime—

And sleeps unmourned of tears."

And this the tribute of the world

To labor's humbler men—

"*A thing the jesting winds have whirled*

On earth and off again!"

What tho he spread the dauntless sail,

And quit the shame of kings—

To break the rugged forest trail

And dwell with silent things?

What tho he turned the blades to hoes,

And tamed the savage breeds?—

We hold their homes! No bugle blows

A woodman's homely deeds.

He made a garden, sowed a seed—

But *we* have plucked the flower!

He laid the faith, we made the creed—

What boots *his* lingering hour?

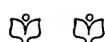
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No mausoleum marks his grave,
No will divides his gold;
No pension soothes a whimpering slave,
His office none will hold.

His tomb is but the earth he trod,
His wealth—the poet's heart;
His gift—a love for man and God,
His post—the honest part.

A common *Man* was Pere Gilbault,
And so the world must say—
“A sodden leaf left by the snow,
Upon the summer way!”

1906



THE HUNTED ONES

THE habit of all of your mothers
Was flight from a stronger race,—
Who knows but the zeal of our brothers
Is zest to your joy of the chase?

THE TIMBER WOLVES

WE are the wolves of the timber land—
Me and the Black and the Bay!

We work by the day for a pittance of pay,
Pork for the man and the horses' hay!

“Slaves,” you say,
“Of the skid and the sleigh!”

It's the echoed word
Of the world you've heard;
For the nags and me
Are the wind and the tree,
And *none* so free!—

We're czars of the lumberin' band!

We sound for the sun his reveille—
With the clank of the loggin'-chain,
And the bitin' pain of the frost disdain!
We warm to the work and won't com-
plain.

Chuck your Floridy flowers!
Michigan woods for ours!
Hills of snow and a hammerin' bell!
Four thousan' scale as hard as hell!
Get up, *Jack!* Together, *Nell!*

Break your tugs!
Shake your lugs!
Your frozen steam
Is a Cuban dream,
When you sleep in the straw with me!

C o n t i n u e d

The *slaves* are rollin' the logs of towns!
Give 'em the card they've drawn!
The blood and brawn and the liquor-o'-
 Dawn

Are enough for us—we're up and gone!
A ten-league run
Is a race with the sun.

The horses' keep
 And a cave for sleep,
(Better a bear than a shiverin' sheep)
Meat and bread
 And a blanket-bed—
And the prayers for more we leave to
 clowns!

To the hags o' storm my song is hurled!
My poem's the creak of the hick'ry rack!
The lash's crack, in the woods rung back,
Is a fire in the veins o' the Bay an' Black!

How they dance,
 And heave and prance!
Oh, wild and free,
 We're comrades three,
 Born of wind and wave!

Little to lose or save—
What of the grave?
The boss of Care is the king of the world!

THE GODS OF THE KI-JIK-ON

THE cedar is thick on the Ki-jik-on,
And a goose is the queen of the sky ;
But the king of the swamp is a Buster
John,

And the gentleman named is *I* !
The same to say, I handle the rein
Of the huskies, Rock and Rob,
And make the law to the timber's pain.
A *king* is a man with a job!

Haw, Rob! Hy, Rock!
Mush, Brush! Duck your block!

We snakes the sticks from dawn to night,
And times it's under the Bear ;
It's a bunk for bed and a badger's fight,—
They's hides is made for wear.
We can't get far and we don't see much
But a hole to the top of the sky ;
They's muck enough for a grave o' such,
And we go *some*, ever we die !

Hy, Rock! Gee, Rob!
Hump! Jump! Chew your cob!

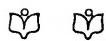
They's many a stick in the “Border of
Hell,”
And thank ye to leave us stay ;
For I am the king and the king is well,
And the same for the Black and Bay.

C o n t i n u e d

The dam o' the nags has run in the clouds,
Their sire in the wind o' the sea;
So here is a laugh to the juniper shrouds,
And *luck* to the pluckiest three!

Whoa, boys! Haw about!
Back track! The hooter's out.

1907



PLAINT OF THE BROOK-TROUT

IN the unfollowed rivers of Dawn,
 Of the hundreds of ages ago,
A motherhood mothered the spawn
 And gave us of freedom to grow.

We lay on the golden bars
 And laughed at the witless fly ;
We looked on the sun and the stars,
 And they came to us out of the sky.

We drank of the spears of the rain
 And wheeled in the storm-dog's ring ;
We knew of no peril or pain,
 Nor feared we a wandering thing.

The Maker of water and land
 Stood watch of our joy of the pool ; —
But we fell to the rod and the hand,
 And our faith was the faith of the fool!

Barbed were the wings of the flies,
 And meshes were laid to deceive ;
The manners of man were lies
 That fish could never believe.

He came as a nature-priest,
 With book—and with hook and gun ;
But the lover of beauty was least,
 And the slaughter of fish was fun.

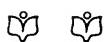
C o n t i n u e d

He cast our children ashore
For the greed of the bittern's beak;
And caught to his need and more—
Pursuing from creek to creek.

And thus were we led and decoyed,
In shallow and pool and bar;
And thus was our faith destroyed,
In mortal and sun and star.

We cherish our gift of life,
And keep from the reach of men
Till wiser in ways of strife—
But *man* will be wiser then!

BOYNE CREEK, 1907



THE PLEASURE OF THE HOUR

WHEN a curtain in the sky,
With the sun a-seeping through,
Is a-taunting me to try
What a fisherman can do—
Would you have me stay at home,
Reading poems in a tome,
While I water at the mouth and live a lie?

For the ringing of the reel
And the rythm of the line
Is the filling of the creel
With the pleasure of the hour when we
dine!

I *have* a tender feeling for the fish,
And I've got to be forgiven for a lot ;
But I love 'em all to pieces—in the dish,
And my feeling's sort o' special when
they're hot.
Oh, the very best of wishes
For the sorry little fishes,
And a hoping they'll be happy in the pot!

For the r-r-rattle of the reel
And the r-r-running of the line
Is the filling of the creel
With the pleasure of the hour when we
dine!

THE WOODMAN TO THE RIVER

UPON THE DROWNING OF A FAVORITE DOG

FAREWELL, false Ki-jik-on!

I bide with thee no more.
Forget that I am gone
To seek a kinder shore.

I've had my joy of thee,
And fain would yet remain ;
But, innocently free,
Thy will hath cost me pain.

Thou'st borne my rod and boat
Through many a truant hour—
Where now *may no man float !*
Nor even reed or flower !

I learned to love thee best,
And grieve to wish thee ill ;—
Farewell, forever, lest
I come to love thee still !

The wall of cedar stoops
Above thy winding banks;
The tangled red-bush droops,
And *they may give thee thanks.*

KE-ZHEEK-ON

SPRITE OF THE PO-TOG-ON-OG

OUT of the fog of a Michigan bog—
A hump and a bump!
And a thump, thump, thump!
It's never a bittern or blubbering frog
Calling a bug or a polly-go-wog—
But the moan of the ghosts of the
Po-tog-on-og!
 'Tlump! tlump! tlump!

It's not the clog of Gog-ma-gog,
Come up with a jump
And a clump, clump, clump!
Or the gutteral blurt of a beagle dog,
Nor yet the grunt of a Jibway hog—
But the wail of hosts of the
Po-tog-on-og!
 'Tlump! tlump! tlump!

Time will jog and jump his cog,
But never can trump
The stump, stump, stump,
That gulped the fog for a morning grog!
The spook of a corn-mill made of a log
Will guard at the grave of the
Po-tog-on-og!
 'Tlump! tlump! tlump!

SEAL OF THE NORTH

AGES ago when the Dawn first lifted,
Audrey, you lay in the far lake-land—
Under the pines where the sands were
 sifted,
And touched my untouched hand.

Your hair was there as the beach-grass
 blowing;
Your eyes—and the sea-wet stones were
 those;
Your flesh was one with the soft surf
 flowing,
Your blush with the frail wild-rose.

Your blood was drained from the North-
 sun's setting,
Your grace from the virgin-white birch-
 tree;
You breathe with the pure, cool breeze
 begetting
The Spring's sweet ecstasy!

Your lyric laugh and the tears, all tender,
Keep to the deeps of a nature-heart
Long reft in the snow-land's still, cold
 splendor;—
You in the moons apart!

DECEMBER 1906

THE WAY OF THE NORTH

THE spruce stands dark in the north-
woods snow,
And the lamps of the log-shack camp
burn low;
For the crew goes dry
When the pay comes down,
And the long hill-trail leads by
To the lights of the taverns' town.

There is friends in the woods—as woods
friends go—
And a Halfbreed John and a Bigfoot Joe
Was a pair in a bunk
And mess-mate chums;—
But there *be* friends takes the hunk,
And there *be* friends gets the crumbs!

In the taverns' town on a New Years
night
There's a girl and a drink and a curse-set
fight;
And a Halfbreed John
And a Bigfoot Joe
Turn friendship out with a gun,
And boast of a boasting foe.

The long hill-trail leads back to the camp
When the dawn's dim glow is the woods-
man's lamp;—

C o n t i n u e d

But a bunk left bare
And the mess-plates down
Is a creepish sign—*Beware*
Of the lights of the taverns' town!

The trail-side bush and the stars might
know
Of the purse and the corpse of a Bigfoot
Joe;
But the shame-paled face
Of the midday sun
Turned off from the blood-cursed place
Of the crime that the night saw done!

But a ghost took scent of the snow-packs'
track
Stained red—and a Halfbreed John came
back
To the sanguine cry
And the posse's blow;—
And the fir trees point to the sky
That a corpse hangs black below!

CAMP KI-JIK, 1908

DE FISHAIR OF DE SISH-CA-WET

Ah ain't t'ink 'bout dees mill-job here,—
 Ah dream an' dream an' dream!
Two, t'ree year more de devil' spear
 Be pike me down de stream.

A'm have some diffrrant t'ing to t'ink,
 'Bout bettair day went by;
When all de nord-man feesh an' drink
 And don't be 'fraid to die.

Ah b'lieve Ah'm den 'bout twenty-five,
 Be marry firs'—one son;
Far up de nord-shore Ah be drive,
 Where Pigeon Rivair run.

De lak be fill' wid feesh long 'go;
 Ah bring de firs' pon'-net,
An' teach de Injin—course *Ab know-*
 To catch de *sish-ca-wet*.

Dees sish-ca-wet be kin' o' trout,
 She mak' good feed, you boil;
Ma wife pack barrel, tak' heem out,
 Dare's *two eench bes' kin' oil!*

Eef Ah'm have save Ah don't pile slab
 For dollair quartair 'day;
But how we know de Yankee grab
 An' all de trouts go 'way?

Continued

Well, well, who care eef all be spen'?

Ah tell you dees be sure—

Ab geeve you gold, you geeve me frien'—

Ah'm reesh! an' you be poor!

Ah wish Ah be young man some more—

'Bout twenty-five — you bet,

Ah tak' de lak' to ol' nord-shore

An' tra ma luck dare yet!

But Ah be old, an' pile de board

From sun-up till she set;

An' in ma min' Ah pack ten cord

Dem sam' blam' sish-ca-wet!

But aftair 'while de Frenchman die;

Den trout swim on de beash,

De franc-piece rain down in de sky,

An' every man be reesh!

IN WILD AMERICAY

MY name is Nick O'Reilley
And I come from Ballybay,
But I 'ave't saw old Ireland
In many a weary day;
For I'm workin' in the lumber-woods
Of wild Americay,
And I've got a bunch of babies here
Behooves me for to stay.

I miss the bogs of Erin
(But I've got the swamps of Ayr)
And the murphies in the counties
(But the *spuds* is pretty fair).
The sarpents is leary
As the frogs be over there,
But they's fairies in a plenty
And the ghosts be every where.

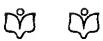
For the whiskey of old Ireland
We've got a brand of *booze*,
But the laws o' camp is rigorous,
And them I don't abuse.
They's a Sunday game o' poker
As I'm likelier to lose—
But the bill I pays in blarney
That's a coin they can't refuse!

My feet is stuck in Michigan,
Me heart for Erin longs;

C o n t i n u e d

But I works for Yankee silver
And I sings the Irish songs.
The woman lays furninst the pines,
And here the bairns belongs;
So I feeds thim with the music
Of the silver skidding-tongs!

CAMP KI-JIK, 1907



THE CRIME OF LAND

AH come dees place, Ah b'lieve it be
 'Bout Forty-t'ree or four;
Den mos' de folks be cedar tree,
 Grow 'round de harbor shore.

Ah be de gov'ment carpentair
 To buil' de Injin school— .
So dey can teach de red man's heir
 How he can mak' de fool!

De Injin he's good fix dat tam,
 She be de happy man.
Dey live lak fam'ly, all de sam;
 De chief keep hol' de lan'.

Dey raise de corn and some potac,
 Dey have de wood an' feesh
An' deer, an' blanket for dair back—
 Dat's all de man can weesh!

Den after 'while some *blanc*-face come
 Wid bag of ten-cent grease;
Dey t'ink he's God! Dey drink hees rum
 And smoke de pipe-of-peace!

An' dare ees where de game begin,
 An' dare de Injin lose!
He's geeve hees farm for pint of gin
 And pair ol' Yankee shoes!

C o n t i n u e d

Dare where Ah buil' de Injin school,
De *white* man plant hees house;
He's be de robbair-cat to rule—
De Injin be de mouse!

Now dey's cry in de swamp for bread,
An' lak to fin' dair frien'.
Ah guess een hell, when dey be dead,
Dey find dair partnair den!

Dat man is in de devil's net
'Fore he be in de sod!
De hones' man ees bes' man yet—
An' dat be sure as God!

1903



THE SUNSET OF MY YEARS

SOMETIMES when I'm a-settin' here,
 a-waitin' for the night,
The sun is stoopin' over low and spread-
 in' of his light
On the puddles in the road there, and the
 reachin' shadders fold
Down around the corn and popples that
 is throwin' back the gold.
Then I 'magine that a voice I know is
 callin' home the steers
From the woods along the gulley—and
 it sort o' starts the tears.

It was nip an' tuck with us awhile a-try-
 in' to get along,
And I calculate it made the bonds a-tween
 us middlin' strong.
Him an' me had pulled together—yes—
 for more 'an forty years.
An' reg'lar, most, as that old clock I'd
 heard him call the steers.
Then one evenin' while the shadders
 picked the gleanin's of the day,
Alf, *he* heard a voice a-callin', sort o'
 sweet,—an' went away!
And I reckon that's the reason, in this
 sunset of my years,
Why I wait for night to gather and I
 can't keep back the tears.

ROBBINS'-SIDIN' FARM

HAVE you ever been to Robbins'-Sidin'
farm?

That's down along the railroad track a
ways.

Now there's a place as does a heart no
sort o' harm,
An' kind o' calls ye back to country days!

They's somethin' 'bout the stumpy feed-
in' field

As draws you there an' keeps you settin'
'round,

While fleecy clouds by soothin' winds is
reeled

Off on the sky; an' shadders run across
the rollin' ground.

Down there's a shaggy sheep a-standin'
still—

To make a shadder on a limpin' lamb;
An' some are nibblin' bushes on the hill
Till evenin', then they foller, single-file,
a leadin' ram.

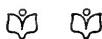
They's a clanky bell a-tinklin' now an'
then,

And a killdeer goes a-cryin' 'round a
puddle—

C o n t i n u e d

Where you see a patch o' heaven, look-
in' in—
An' you're feelin' like your money-mak-
in' wits was in a muddle
An' you hadn't got a solitary sin!

ROBBINS, 1902



THE HORSE OF PETE LAREAU

SACRE! you laugh ma ol' Paree?
You t'ink she's sick to kill!
Dees hoss make leetle sad, may be—
But sick?—no more as Bill!

I tell you 'bout dees horse, my boy:
I feed him twenty year;
She be ma frien', ma life, ma joy!
I kill him now?—Dat's queer!

I tak' Paree to circus t'ing
'Bout fifteen year ago;
Dare be t'ree acre in de ring,
An' plenty hoss to show.

Continued

I heech him in de sulkey dare
An' pat him on de head—
“Dey's plenty competition here;
Now show you don't be dead!”

I tak' de rein an' hol' him tight,
An wait de signal gun;
De pistol shoot! Ma hoss step light!
Sacre! but how she run!

Den all de hoss spread out dere nose,
De spark fly from de stone!
No odair hoss go fast like dose—
'Cept dees, ma *jolie* roan!

Ma hoss he keep de inside track,
An' make dat cirkees short;
In just t'ree mineet she be back,
An' Paree hol' de fort!

An' den I'm have one odair try.
I speak to him some more—
“If you be beat, *mon cher*, I cry;
It make my spirit sore.”

I rub hees leg down wid de sponge,
An' tak' de rein ma han';
She hear de gun, she make one lunge!
You t'ink she understan'.

Continued

She go! She go! wid hundaird feet!
Hees mane whip lak de flag!
She mak' dat cirkees—*two* mineet!—
Behin' one odair nag.

She feel dam sorry, dat Paree!
He hol' hees head in shame,
An' shet hees eye so he don't see
Dat *fail* go 'gainst hees name.

Den I say, "Don't you mind, Paree—
You don't be all to blame;
You win de nex' one, sure, for me—
An' dare we have de game!"

An' den I see dat horse wake up,
An' know she say "I will!"
I geeve him drink, I take one cup—
To show we be frien' still;

I sponge his leg; I smood his hair;
I tak' ma seat behin'.
She *tremble* lak de leaf, wid fear!
An' I be 'fraid dat sign!

I hol' de line; I wait de shot;
I say, "Be brave, ma boy!"
But dees dam horse! I guess I got
One bass-wood duck deecoy!

C o n t i n u e d

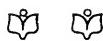
But dare's de gun! an' here's de gale!
Dees hoss come out his grave!
She tak' de air! he's mad! he sail,
Lak sea-gull on de wave!

No frog be scare can jump lak dat!
No fish can cut de sea
So fas' she go! I lose ma hat;
But I say, "Go! Paree!"

She go lak blin'! She hear no soun'
Aftair she hear dat gun.
She make t'ree acre—all way 'roun'—
Gee Cry!—jus' *half past one!*

Now what you t'ink 'bout dat, ma men?
T'rough all dese twenty year
She be ma pal, ma pride, ma frien'!
I keel heem now?---Dat's queer!

CROSS VILLAGE, 1904



THE WAGE OF THE WILSONS

NONE shall forget that Sabbath Day

When ten bold, skilless men
Defied their God upon the Bay---
And five returned again!

The schooner *Coral*—mark the name—
On roistering pleasure bent,
Swung to the breeze, despite the shame
The warning church-bells lent.

The frail ship sailed with eagle grace
And gently whipping wings;
And luffed, for wind, in pride-of-place
Just off the bay-head springs.

Upon the east, the rocks—what harm?
To westward, open sea;
In all the air a breathless charm,
As on that day should be.

Behind the drowsy fishing-town,
Upon the bluff's high brow
A lonely Indian, looking down,
Mused o'er his Then and Now.

There gazing off, as red-men will,
He weighed the changing sky;
And, save the schooner resting still,
No more could he descry.

C o n t i n u e d

Within his heart he felt the tooth
 Of some mysterious hour;
And toward the sea—in dismal truth—
 He caught the quickening lower!

He knew the Great Lake squalls of old,
 And knew their demon ire—
More ruthless than the northland cold
 Or raging forest-fire.

And there upon the brooding bay,
 Without suspicion's care,
Ten mortals and a vessel lay,
 With canvas all aglare!

The one man saw, the one man knew—
 And he of savage breed;
But forest-fleet the Indian flew
 To cry the fateful need.

The storm came on in fury-burst!
 The bay leaped white with foam!
No boasting village-father durst
 To quit his sheltering home.

But where was Wilson and his son,
 The humble fishing men?
Look toward the east! What see you run
 Like some mad water-hen?

C o n t i n u e d

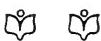
What landsman can believe his eye?—
A pound-boat splits the air!
A schooner wrecks—and ten men die!—
But Wilson's hope is there!

The pleading wretches pray and gasp,
And rise and plead again!—
And thank their God that they may grasp
The hands of braver men.

And five were saved and five were lost
Upon that Sabbath Day!—
And this the retribution cost,
So cleric men will say.

Then what of Wilson and his son?
Reward of gold is theirs;
But “No!” they grieve, “What wage is
won
But *five lone widows' tears?*”

LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY, early.



ASSASSINATION OF THE KING

DARE'S de land---she lay lak serpent---
Twenty mile out in de lake.
She's be name de Isle of Beavair
'Cause she's lak de dam dey make.

I remembair Eighteen-Fifty,
Den I'm fishing on dat shore;
Most de people be dose Mormon
Who don't stay dare any more.

What's de reason dey's all scattair?
I'm one of de man what know!
If de fly go, dat is bettair
Dan be freeze out by de snow!

If you lak to know dis story,
I can tell you what is true;
Den you see how some de churchman
Be no bettair dan de Jew.

All de Mormon pay de ten-tax,
All de Cat'lic, he refuse;
So dey steal his net an' fish-boat,
Cow an' sleigh an' snow-pack shoes!

Many year de Frenchman stand dees---
'Cause dat time dare be no law---
Den de French and Injin contrac'
An' de Cat'lic show de claw!

Continued

I can stick de stake in san' dare,
Hundaird of dem, where dey's thieve
Shoot down lak de dog, an' bury
Wid no time for pray an' grieve!

Ol' De Strang be king dat Islan'—
She's de smart man in de worl'!
He's be lawyer, pries' an' doctair,
An' de *black fox wid de girl!*

Fine blue eye an' yellow whisker!
Straight lak tree, wid voice lak win'!
Sing de song an' play de fiddle,
Pray de Lord an' mak de "tin!"

Strang have only t'irteen woman,
So he hunt for nodair wife!—
Lak de Frenchman set he's pon'-net,
Dey's some white-fish lose her life!

Madame Bedfort be de beauty
On de Island in dose day—
So dees King sen' off de husban',
Den he steal hees dame away!

When de news have reach to Guillam,
Where he's trapping in de Nord,
He's go mad an' swear de vengeance
By de French an' by de Lord!

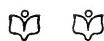
C o n t i n u e d

In de spring de gov'ment cuttair
She's be lan' to Ol' St. Jame'.
Den de captain send for Strang dare,
See'f he know some smugglair' name.

When de King come to de gang-plank,
Hol' hees head high in de air—
Dare's two pistol-shot from fish-house!
Den dey's blood-spot in hees hair!

I don't swear who kill de great man,
But de cuttair sail away—
Wid one Frenchman for de deck-han'
When de sun go down dat day!

1904



PI'TURES UP IN READMOND

I'VE heerd about them paintin's from
the Holland paintin'-school,
Pi'turin' diggers in the taters, women
washin' by a pool,
And like o' that; and folks a-hayin' wear-
in' brogans made o' wood
And a-doublin' over sickles that we're
thinkin' ain't so good
Now-a-days. And folks are sayin' that
it's like your breathin' air
Jest to look at them old pi'tures! I ain't
doubtin' they *are fair*;
But I'm 'lowin' here in Readmon' they
is things that's full as fine!—
Mebbe not so durned old fashion, but
they'll *do*, I guess, for mine!

Now jest take a squint at Renie there, a-
settin' on the bench:
They's a scoop o' sunshine pourin' thru
the trees and tryin' to drench
Her and the berries she's a-sortin' and a-
throwin' out the specks
To the hens and chickens waitin' and a-
cranin' of their necks!

C o n t i n u e d

The only chicken-fixin's that's a-stickin'
 'round *her* gown
Is them patches of the sunlight that's a-
 comin' dancin' down—
Golden crickets on her apern, faded blue,
 and in her hair,
Like a swayin' bunch o' golden-rod it
 keeps a-playin' there!

The cullin's of the berries she's a-throw-
 in' to the chickens;
But the berries on her lips!—Gee! if *I*
 could have the pickin's,
At her feet I'd crow and cackle till I got
 a even peck!—
Like a ragged, beggin' banty rooster,
 cranin' of his neck!

1900



ALONG THE HARBOR SHORE

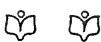
I LIKE the days of northern Spring
When leaves emerge the bud,
The birches turn a tender green
And maple-blossoms blood.

A sail is golden in the sun,
Against the purple hill;
A gull is high on silent wing,
The swallows never still.

Where westing sun and fog are met,
Along the harbor's shore,
An aged fisher reels a net
And mutters primal lore.

He is not of the Spring of life,
Yet find we equal cheer;—
He, that the *old* ship weathered through,
I, that the new may clear.

AT HOME, 1908



IF I WERE PAN

DEEP in the wood across the way,
I dreamt that I was Pan today,
And tuned me joyous pipes to play.
The fronds came out to me,
The nymphs and graces three—
The world was all aglee!
For I was Pan and this was Spring!

I played that I was Pan today
And laughed at mortals on the way,
But no man heard and none would stay.
Their ears were sorely dull,
And sad their eyes and full
Of pelf and pride and mull!—
And spring to them is *never* Spring!

I know that I was Pan a day,
But would that I were Pan alway—
With ears like his and eyes of May,
To hear and feel and see!
Pipe tunes to bird and bee
And set the world's heart free
With laughter, love and light of Spring!
I would if I were Pan.



A GROSBEAK IN THE GARDEN

WHEN through the heaviness and clam-
oring throng
Of mortal ways I hear the mellow song
Of birds, the birds seem sent to me.
If this be my insanity,
As men will measure it—so let it be!

When shadows that no will can drive
away
Entomb me—then no sermon blesseth
day,
More true and sweet than that pure note
My ear hath caught afloat
From out the garden grosbeak's fervent
throat.

Thou, crimson-caped messenger of God,
Seem'st not to feel the thorned and bitter
rod
Of Life—thy hours are joyously beguiled
With melodies so wild!
In sooth, thy creed is *trusting as a child!*

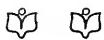
Full knowing that thy living days are brief
Thou grudgeth even an hour for sober
grief;
Thy poems are scattered free, without a
name,

C o n t i n u e d

Nor hast thou thought of fame!
Is *my* unpaid aspiring yet my blame?

The world is wide 'twixt man and worlds
 divine,
And hearts are dull to such a song as thine;
But *I* have heard. Sing on, from tree
 to tree,
As thou hast sung to me,—
And more shall find the God that guid-
 eth thee!

1906



THE HUMMING-BIRD

WHEN Summer sobs her languor to
the Sky,
And restive spirits vex the ways of men
In vain emprise; within my garden then
Will I elect to let the world go by,
And watch the humming-bird. Not seen
to fly,
He comes, and vanishes, and comes
again
And sips the sweets of honeysuckles
when
Their lips are frail—but leaves them not
to die.

So I have thought how good it were to be
This ruthful corsair, bent on such pur-
suit,
Against the wear of my foreplanning
hours;—
How good it were to live thus liegelessly
Upon the world's unreckoned blossom-
loot—
Yet spare from any harm its guarded
flowers!

A U T U M N

BURDEN banked with many an autumn
 flower,
The hills of aster, golden-rod and tyme
Exhale the spell of some old Persian
 rhyme
Revealed from parchments of the ages'
 dower.
The purple mists enshroud the solemn
 hour,
The throats of Nature hum a requiem
 chime;
The pageant pauses with the dirge sub-
 lime,
And Life is laid beneath the burning
 bower.

When Autumn flaunts her symbols of
 the dead,
And darkness trespasses on hours of
 light;
When frosts foray with banners gold and
 red,
And all the future dawns are robed of
 night--
Then quits my soul her habit's clamor-
 ing flight
And turns to make her peace and funeral
 bed!

Blown by the Winds

*THE sun sets cold on Weicamp Lake,
And the Fall, with her frost-wet mouth,
Summons the drake from his home in the
brake,
And the wings of the flock cleave south.*

*The warmth is fled from the bare brown hills,
And the light from the famished field;
A man's heart fills where the mad crowd
wills,
And the town takes over his yield.*

THE COPRID BEETLE

THE dragon drinks at the fount of noon,
The cicades sing in the tree;
The night moth sips at the flower-of-the-
moon—
But only a coprid beetle am I,
And a coprid beetle I 'ld be.

They plume and prate of a sun and star,
And the work of a worm called Man;
But the road to the realm is rough and far.
There's work in the dark and dirt for me—
I 'll be what a beetle can.

My mother a coprid beetle born—
My sons will be no more.
We work, nor worry; no work we scorn.
There's peace in the crypt of the coprid
cave—
What more in the Ultimate Shore?

A coprid they carved me in agate and gold,
On a Pharaoh's neck I lay;
They put us away in a cave of old,—
And I carry a text of the Book of the
Dead
As I roll my ball of clay!

ST. LOUIS, 1904

THE CALL OF THE WINDS

I FAIN would laugh with all the laughing world,
And let the relic memories be furled
With banners of crusades and laid away
With tomes and trumpery of the older day;
With crooning history, Time's romance,
be done—
Let ages die, and wake the "On and on!"

And yet in dreaming hours, despite my will,
Past friends and fading pictures linger still.
Old wars with all their wrongs, caesars and kings
With all their crimes and ancient clamorings,
And troubadours, and pirates of the sea—
Seem still to mock our lauded Liberty.
Somehow when I would tempt the tuneful strings
I find them fraught with hymns of buried things—
I hear the cadence of the awkward flail,
And Indians moaning on the bison-trail.

The clanking enginery of modern strife
Profanes the obsequies of sweeter life.

C o n t i n u e d

There's grandeur in the press of steam
and steel,
But heart-beats in the throb of oaken
keel!
And on the winds a runic wail of doom
Pursues the tattered sail and trembling
boom
Of one-time stately ships. The hulks, all
mute,
Swing off in funeral pomp; and in pursuit
The squadron hounds of fretful Com-
merce bay
Their greed of wealth and ruthless pride
of prey!

A golden glory filled the sea and air
When Turner saw the failing Temeraire!
No harmonies contest the sunset fire,
The fondest fancies haunt the Autumn
pyre;
So, when the Muses seek the tender
theme,
They find the treasure passing toward a
dream!

NEW YORK, 1903

L I B E R T Y B E L L

AH, here is our Liberty Bell,
Paraded in pride of old!
I would that my tongue could dwell
In the turbulent times she tolled.

I would it were mine to reveal,
In a reverent rage of song,
The secrets her sibyls conceal
And the motley and militant throng.

Forgetful of things that be,
I turn to the long ago—
To the years ere men were free
And the world moved on but slow;

To the days of ruffle and wig
And leathern-apron and hose;
Of flint-lock, horn and brig,
And the spirit that went with those.

My mind is peopled of courts
And powder and silk and sword;
The hound and the falcon sports,
And pride of lady and lord.

I witness the hurrying groups
To the hall of the prophet's light,
And the red and the rags of troops
In the dim-lit streets of night.

C o n t i n u e d

But thou, old Liberty Bell,
Attuned to the patriot-shout,
Didst ring for a tyrant's knell,
And ring till freedom was out!

Now loud shall Liberty sing
Te Deums around her shrine;
And nations bent shall bring
Their altars unto thine!

PHILADELPHIA, 1904

JAPAN THE BEAUTIFUL

THE ghost of grace through heathen
tides and times,
Hath kept her vigil 'neath thy trem-
bling stars!

Thy cherry-blossom cheeks, in peace
or wars,
Beam in rapport with all thy sweetest
chimes!

New states may grow where fallen states
have been;—

The pulse of Beauty, dead, shall beat
no more!

Thine not the cause of wall and tower
and store;—

Thy citadels are laid in hearts of men!

THE DRAGON CITY

IN this unchanging shaft-light hour by
hour,

Pent in and comfortless, the city's power
Goes grinding on around me; and the sky,
A somber square the empty winds go by,
Scarce marks the transit of the night or day.
A million unfixt spirits take their way
Beneath my keep, nor seem to reckon why
They tempt a dragon, follow far, and die!

I marvel I could quit the peace of fields
For this, where all our fervent sowing
yields

But mortal thorns to weave us penal
crowns!

I have not learned the tenets of the towns:
I seem disarmed where every man con-
tends,
Denying virtue and rejecting friends!

Where I have wandered, on the northern
hills,

A Presence full of power and promise fills
Our hearts with common joy; and there
we learn

How comradeship and simple trust will
turn

The fear of beasts and enmity of men.
But what avails the code I gathered then?

Continued

The God of farther places *here* they scorn,
And flout the solemn faiths that *I* have
sworn!

Were men but rude, like some unlettered
breed,
Then might I stand, as one who knew the
creed;
But here are sinuous ways and sultan
smiles,
Soft insolence, diplomacies and wiles.
These subtler crafts plain men can never
know;
And fall as falls the unresisting snow!

From this most pitiless of human mills
I wonder I am not among the hills,
Whose faithful benediction followed me!
And I am pained of infidelity
At parting from the pines and golden
sands
And old-time friends—the warm and rug-
ged hands
Of long-true friends! I wonder I should
roam
This way! My heart is *there*—and there
is *home*!

CHICAGO, 1906

AFTER THE DAYS OF LABOR

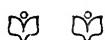
A Rhapsody

AFTER the days of labor—
The nettling cares, discordant necessity,
The pettiness that unmakes men—
Out! Out of it all!
Out to the remedies of God!
Air unmonopolized!
Trees in peace-tussle with the wind!
Grass, flowers, rivers, waves, bird-songs—
Uncorporated, untrusted!
In with these! Out with tedium!
Off with burdens of past days!
Out with fears of future days!
No Past, no Future! Today, only Today!
Sunshine, soft clouds, laughing voices!
Only Today! Enough!
And no concern!
But a step to Heaven, and the way is free,
Free to all men—as all is free
To hare, finch, ant, squirrel, perch and
 pelican and bee!
All free!
This, this only, this shall be the life for
 mankind—
This the life to make men and make
 women!
This shall yield high thoughts, bright
 hope, prophetic words, divine art;
Faith, charity, godliness, comradeship!

Continued

This shall purge all meanness, rivalry,
 exaction, hunger for the unattainable!
All *is* attained—attained by all!
No gold shall add to its richness!
No world-comfort shall add to its delight!
You who sleep, awake!
You in the sick-ward, you in the world-
 war,
Surrender! Capitulate!
Sell that thou hast and give to the poor!
It's giving waste!
Surrender to sky and wave and wind!
Out to God's remedies!—
And **LIVE!**

INDIANA, 1901



T H E P I L G R I M

PALÉ, pure Star of the North,
I come to thee, burning of cities;
To thee as to a shrine, I come!
Low, cool Mist of the North,
I seek thy inviolable veil—
Within thy frail cloistering walls
Fold me ere I fail utterly.
A slag of man, I come, contrite!
Keen, calm Wind of the North,
Blow out of the hills! I've need of thee!
In thy long, cool tresses lay my fevered
brow—
Fevered of cities and of sin!
One touch of thy fingers, Wind of the
North,
And I am free—
Free of the purple sin of the South,
Free of the slime of the cities;
Free of the falser Gods of crowds!
Stript of all falsity I come surrendering
To thee, deep, blue Sky of the North!
At the fast ship's prow, Star of the North,
In old faith, in old love,
I come, cast down to thee!

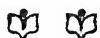
ON SHIPBOARD

AFTER TROUBLous WINDS

AFTER the troublous winds have wearied and turned to sleep,
I lie on the cool beach-sands, in the sound
 of the waves of the deep;
And the waves of the firm dead-sea, that
 carry the gray of the sky,
Bear earnest of peace to me though the
 years and the worlds go by.

The waves of the wind-reft bay, that reflect and reject as they will,
Unvexed and unfaltering roll and the law
 of control fulfill;—
And this is the *life* that will be when our
 fears are folded away—
For the mind is the wide-swung sea, and
 the sky of the soul is gray.

LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY, 1907



Ashes and Embers

WHEN the first floods had newly quit the earth,

*And annals of the world lay in the loom,
Awaiting time and thunders,—to consume
The desert hours a Nile boy in his mirth
Carved a rude shard of clay to deck his girth.*

*And this the paleolith left of the doom
Of centuries, or scarab from the tomb
Of Pharaoh—treasures now of priceless worth.*

*So I must wonder, when I shape my shrine
Of feral verse—though no intrinsic good,
Will it be buried by the years and then,
As legend of the long-departed wood,
Be saved to relish like some ancient wine
Or relic of old sunken Stavoren?*



M E M O R I A L

A SLEEP is on the northern town
Of Hearts-beat-slow;
The very steeples wear a frown—
The gardener is low!
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
By all the slave is scorned.
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
By none will he be mourned.

Old time he bore his country's flag—
Forgotten now.
A shroud will cover him, a rag;
A scar his brow.
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
A soldier more has slept;
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
The soldier *has* been wept!

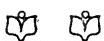
He knew no kindly look or word
Through laboring hours;
He muttered curses, all unheard,—
And planted flowers!
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
No wreath is on *his* grave.
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
Who waits to mourn the slave?

Toll for the slave! Toll for the brave!
(His curse a flag!)

C o n t i n u e d

His gardens bless the child and knave!
(His shroud a rag!)
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
What though the slave is scorned?
Toll, bells! Toll, bells!
For him who is not mourned!

HARBOR SPRINGS, 1908



V E N I C E

IT has been mine to know, in younger
days,
That love, in fullness, finds no utterance;
No mortal word can serve, much less en-
hance
A perfect thing. The wondrous Nippon
vase
Desponds my tongue; the while to ruder
clays
Of dull unpromising, the Muses dance
And wake with hearts of wild exuberance!
So Fancy weaves on umber warp her
praise!

No song of mine confirms that I have seen
San Marco's opal dome and wept be-
fore
The Campanile's fall. I have not
sung
Ca d'Oro's grace nor of the light serene
That never was on others' seas, Mag-
gior
Venezia!—to me thy bells have rung.

TO GEORGE GORDON BYRON

THOU cursed of all the world for wanting God,
And blessed of God with gifts all but divine;
So might one hour thy smallest worth be mine
I 'ld fill that hour with praise of thee. No rod,
However cruel, would stay my tongue; no sod
With all its fearsome coldness I 'ld decline.
Enough one leaf of laurels that are thine—
One tear of those that bathe the paths you trod.

So sure the change of mortal hearts and times,
So great the final mead of stings you bore—
Who can but envy you the spear? Thy rhymes
Of bleeding heart are saved to pay thy score;
But I may bear *my* cross to calvary,
Nor rise by truth to immortality.

(On the fly-leaf of *The Castaway*)

L O U I S I A N A

OUT of the ash of Ages
Damp with the tide of Time,
Over the reeking pages
Red with the Heathen Crime—
Here hath the forest Fable
Fought with the corpse of Fear,
Building a barracked gable
Learned of a Savage leer.

Spite of the mountain and torrent,
Huron and hunger and bear;
Praying in plagues abhorrent,
Minding of Midasan blare—
Jesuit, knight and trader,
Crozier and steel and skin,
Fool-of-the-Fountain and raider,
Founders of Faith and Sin—
Chanted their Molochite *Aves*
On through the wilds of the Years,
Laying their laws as lavas
Hot with the blood and the tears!

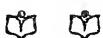
In mounds of a Memory faded,
The Kingdoms planted their feet;
The stream where the bittern waded
Thronged of a throbbing fleet.
Mine and Timber and Meadow
Meet their debt to the Dead,

C o n t i n u e d

And over the shame and the shadow
The Sachem of Peace is led!

Hewer and digger and tinker,
Hammer and hoe and shear;
Loaner and lover and thinker,
Poet and painter and seer—
Shoveled the sand to building,
Tethered the river to power,
Pounded the rock to gilding—
And looked on Temple and Tower!

ST. LOUIS, 1904



G A T E S O F B R A S S

A SINGLE taper, flaming dim and low,
 Played fitfully on relic altar-gold;
Thru windows wrought with miracles
 of old
Fell faint the saffron of the afterglow.

Before the penance-bench Sir Hardistan,
 Scarce more than youth, of sturdy limb
 and fair,
Knelt down as under longer years' de-
 spair
That marked his brow with age ere age
 began.

Within the shadow stooped the solemn
 priest,
In patience with the sorrows of the
 years—
His cup of life o'erfilled of others' tears,
Had spilled his tragedy as theirs increased.

“Sir Knight, I keep the refuge of the
 poor—
Here knees of plaintive misery are bent
When worldly wares and light of life
 are spent.

Thou'rt not of these, but yet in strength
 secure.”

C o n t i n u e d

“Father, I wander thru the endless night,
And the pale moon to me appears but
rare.

I seek, the last, thy famed candle-flare
To light my steps and stumbling steed
aright.”

“What meanest thou, Sir Knight?—Hast
naught of home?”

“Aye, Father, home—such home as all
men seek,
And wife and child, and stables of the
sheik,
And gold to grace a triumphry of Rome.”

“Grieve not, Sir Knight, if erst thy joust-
ing failed.”

“No conflict but a conquest, holy one;
The bravest have engaged me and are
done
With tournaments, whilst I am victor
hailed.”

“Find’st thou no weal in neighbor, friend
or kin?”

“Thy pardon, sire—thou speak’st in
language worn.
Can mortal fellowship be bred of scorn?

C o n t i n u e d

The wolf am I; the whimpering folds
are men.”

“Mayhap thy alms are sown to thankless
soil.”

“Alm? Alms? Wouldst fling thy beads
to craven oaves?

My gift is steady steel, outlasting loaves!
But haste!—the serpent Night doth loose
her coil!”

“Haste romps, Sir Knight, without the
cloister gates—

With such as thou on worldly roads it
runs,

In vain pursuit of far retreating suns!
My humble lamp will serve but him who
waits.

“The Sangreal lay not the wanton’s way!
God’s love for love; His mercy for
thine own!

Turn back whence thou hast come—
unarmed, alone!

Beyond the east awaits the dawn of day!”

THE O DALIS K

OFTTIMES in these our passion-resting
hours,

When the light-mist of early twilight
Veils the spectral mosque-tips,
And all the silver bells in still suspense
Await the towered muezzin's call
To prayer—the soft dew-gathering time
When rose-perfumes from our seraglio
garden

Float low and deep upon my idle sense—
Then have I dreamed a dream,
Though it be all a fancy-fabric,
Makes for peace to you and me, Fatima.

I have dreamed of other times and lands,
Of far-called women freely born—
Free to choose and free of any master
And of Moslem power—all save Christian
creeds.

In these, my reveries, the winds
From over seas will bear the sobs
Of childless wives, and then the cries
Of many children left of mothers
Weeping for the fathers strange!
I hear of marriage-beds of brides unloved
And maidens solitary all their days
In pining for some heart they move not;
And it has come to me—ah, truly false—
That those most virtuous are most bereft,

Continued

Without abode or any resting place
Or sympathy's caress to bless their sleep—
And this because of *goodness* and the hope
Of some out-lying, loveless Paradise to
come!

So, I am told that in that country ruled
Without a king, the ways of freedom
Are not free, and woman's liberty
Is woman's reigning woe.

Her fickle fury toys unsavingly,
And, being free, men turn unscathed
Away, weary of play, to be the masters
Men can be! And woman—
Worn of trifling, stale of beauty—lies
Remembered in her obloquy, or, worse,
forgot!—

A slave abject to self-invented custom!

And you and I, Fatima---we would not,
From our sweet certainty and guardian
walls,

Go in those ways of freedom-woe
An hour's part---but we should rend
Our matted hair, to be forgiven our dal-
liance,

And would turn our troubled faces back
To him, the Radiant One, our master!

MY TAPER'S RECOMPENSE

MY candle burned for long to those fair
days
When chivalry and modest worth held
true
The scale of life; and then would I
pursue
In fancy backward up those older ways,
To peace! The modern fabric wants the
grays
And love-care that our mother's sam-
pler knew;
The world takes on a false, fantastic
hue,
And hearts and homes are wrought of
sordid clays.

But here are truth and sweetness of the old
Set with the art and splendor of the new,
Like strands of silver thread among the
gold;
That silence-charm, the heritage of
few,
Frail beauty and the purity of tears—
All saved in thee to pay my waiting years!

“*The Oaks,*” PONTIAC, 1908

C L O I S T E R B E A D S

I BESEECH Thee, Mother of Christ, to
know Thy will:
Have I not loved Thee and obeyed, and
kept the vigil,
And denied my flesh thus long, *so* long!
Have I not thought to save my soul spot-
less of the world?—
My tear-burned eyes are weary looking
up to Thee.
Thou hast been forgotten never, yet—
and yet—
(Forgive me, Mother!) I am lonely—
lonely as the grave.
Passing joys, like unto Heaven, I have
found
In blossoms of the Spring and sunlight on
the snow and soothing rain—
All these, and prayer has been a moment's
solace.
Mother Merciful, forgive if I offend—
But why am I unhappy always? Am I
tried and wanting,
While those others who have knelt to
their own beings,
Laugh so joyously and are content?
They know Thee not, and yet, not know-
ing, have they pleased Thee?

C o n t i n u e d

Dost Thou truly dwell in Heaven apart--
or art Thou *Love*?
And is the voice of mortal love *Thy* voice?
Strange earth-songs call me, urgent as the
will to live,
And I forget. Then I remember Thee.
But as I turn from *him* my heart is rent!
Mother of Christ, hast Thou not loved?
Hast Thou not known the peace of moth-
erhood?
And canst Thou not forgive *Thy* novices?
At night and when the stars go out at dawn,
At noon and every hour I crave what is
forbid--
And, weeping, I am frail and have not
prospered!
Must I fail and die—hungering as some
hidden flower?
Thou art so far---so far from me---and *he*
is near.
If I could know that Thou hast sent him!
Hast Thou? *Hast* Thou? Mother of God,
I love him so!

RETRIBUTION (Jungle Law)

IN a far-gone day of the feral Dawn,
Where the jungle code began,
A lion lived with a boast of brawn
And the growl of a brute-heart clan.

He took for his mate a tiger-girl
For her beautiful coat and eyes;
She left her dream in a passion-whirl,
And cried as a tiger cries—

For the jungle law was *Feed and own,*
And Fight and the fawn is yours!
And the doe and the tiger-mate could
moan
In vain for the life that lures.

And the jungle filled with the mongrel-
breed,—
For the mother-lust must live;
And the young ones grew by the lion's
greed
That *took* where it would not *give!*

Her heart went out to a bengal's rune,
And the stars stood by in her cause;
She sang at night to the desert moon
And sighed for the love-made laws.

C o n t i n u e d

But the jungle law and the mongrel-breed
Were strong in the jungle land;
A God was not in the lion's creed—
And two bloods stained the sand!

The brute-king roared of the deed he'd
done,
And the mongrel whelps bowed low;
A tiger-mate and a chosen one
Lay stark in the Bombay glow!

DETROIT, 1909



THY LOVE THE PILOT BE

ROUGH is the way of the sea,
And tossed are the ships amain---
Swayed to the wind and the lea
And back to the course again.

Shivered the hulk with the weight
Of the waves that charge the beam;
Awash are the decks with hate
That licks for the open seam.

The binnacle dips to the locks
Of the surf, from side to side;
And over the sprit the rocks
And the siren of sands deride.

The hour the seaman sleeps
The lorelei songs allure;
The wife of a sailor weeps
And winds mock over the moor.

Our Life is the name of the sea,
And the craft is a mortal man;
The waves are Inconstancy,
And the rocks—to evade, who can!

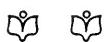
So Truth be the oaken keel,
And Faith an unfaltering sail;
My honor the bulkhead steel,
Thy Mercy the yielding mail—

C o n t i n u e d

And mine is the compass true—
A heart that holds to a star
Which shines in the hope of you
And the buoy of the harbor-bar.

Fear not if the mind of me
In the wrack of the world be tried;
Thy Love may the pilot be—
My Soul comes home with the tide!

To V. L., 1909



THE ABSENT HEART OF ME

THE low sun paints the willow rows,
Their shadows lengthening eastward fall
A purple tracery on the snows;
And Spring is here—but that is all!

A silence broods upon the farm—
Sweet, sweet as some forgotten song
After the battle's mad alarm:
Such peace!—and yet I long and long!

Here dwell the memories of the past,
A tribe as true as God has made,
And friends that yield their honor last;—
And yet my breast must bear a blade!

This house keeps nature's wondrous plan,
Old books and bronze and native art—
All things to move the soul of man;
But voiceless to a stricken heart!

Ah, wealth and crafts of men, how frail,
And empty of all constancy!
Yea, even grace of God must fail!—
You are the absent heart of me!

THE WILLOWS, 1909

MY HEART IS HOME

AND now mad Winter comes again,
The wild winds sweep the stubble-fields;
Against the gray the willows strain.
Blow, blizzard, blow! My heart is healed!

The gnomes in fiendish carnival
Turn chaos loose upon the farm;
The porches creak, the dead limbs fall,
It snows—but Love is safe from harm!

The wolves of winter charge the doors,
Our shutters shake like bones of Death;
The friends heap wood, the back-log roars,
And old regrets—no more, Sweet Breath!

The urn against the chimney sings,
Old books unlock their treasures;
The wind persuades the 'cello strings
To moan—*In souls are melodies!*

As Order makes the charm of home,
Its blessing now is sweet Content;
Its glory—*Rest thou, all who roam,*
And Love, *our* love, its sacrament!

THE WILLOWS, 1909

THE POET'S SHIFT

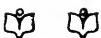
I SAW them there behind the glass---
Red rose, sweet-pea and violet,
Lily and pink and mignonette---
Persuading me; but I must pass.

What would she give if she could know
It hurt my heart to pass them so?---
When she loves rose and mignonette
And dotes upon the violet!

What would I give if these could grow
Along the wayside as I pass!---
And not behind a window-glass
For profit's sake or idle show!

But summer comes and some day yet
We'll gather worlds of mignonette,
Where flowers are free and summers long!
Till then my love must live in song!

DETROIT, 1909



U N T O T H E L E A S T

THE melancholy nights and days of pain,
Travail of poverty and solitude,
The innocent contempt from all the
rude—

Whom I love well—must long ago have
slain

My stubborn faith; but for persistent stain
That saved my need of prayer's deep
interlude.

'Tis well the faults that utterly exclude
The world of men, God's ministry retain!

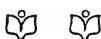
A thousand crises in my years have bade
Me take with falser gods the luresome
meed

Of praise and friends and Plenty's
fallow ease;

But futile penitence hath left me sad
With sorrows that no laughing fellows
heed;

And, lone, I hear the message of the
seas!

1908



THE POET VAGRANT

WERE I to die this hour or some near
day—

Be stricken quick upon the way I've trod,
Say not, "Tis sad the youth has passed
away,

So reft of fortune and so far from God."

Say not in pity that I might have had
The gift and favor of the rich and great—
But that mischosen insolence forbade
My fellows' warning of a hapless fate.

Grieve not that I have spent my years in
dream,

And drifted listless as the vagrant brook—
Have sought me substance in the things
that seem,

And left to earth the semblance of a book.

What though I have not where to lay
my head,

Nor marble weight upon my body's
grave;—

Of this I make no moan when I am dead
And you possess the worth I failed to
save.

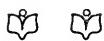
So be it I am soon forgot of men
And laid in alien soil by stranger hands;—

C o n t i n u e d

The pines above my head will mourn me
then,
And waves intone my requiem on the
sands.

Say, rather, this: “He chose to make his
friends
In wood and field, with bird and flower
and tree;
Began his labor where our labor ends,
And saved—the faith in immortality.”

GOOD HART, 1908



THE LARGER DREAM

WHEN winds are rioting upon the drift-ed hills,
And the keen stars defy the frosts of win-
ter;
Weary with the war of men and paltry
wage,
I lay me down to sleep. In that uncon-
sciousness
I know a peace surpassing words.
Age and the weight of years are not with
me,
Nor yet are angels with monotony of
harps,
Nor vanity of jewels and plentitude of
mortal crafts;
But youth is everywhere! and Spring and
happy skies,
And waters dancing in the potent sun!
Cities do I see, but far away and uninhab-
ited, and wraith
As gossamer—domes of inobtrusive hue,
And minarets of phantom mosques
As fleeting as the forms of miracle!
Clad scantily in Attic boy's attire,
And lithe of limb and crowned of myrtle
wreaths--
I gather blossoms from the cherry trees
of far Japan

C o n t i n u e d

And fling them wanton to the Blessed
Damosel!

I walk with Virgil in the vales of Italy
And follow Jaques through the Arden
forest

To the cool springs, and the frail pipes
That Pan is plucking for his instruments.

In light of noon and perfume of laburnum
Wondrous birds of plumage swing with
gladness

On primeval boughs. And as they live, so
also I!

No labor have I dreamed that is not joy-
ous,

And no pain appears to pall the laughter
Of the land of Sleep. The very shadows
Are a benediction, filled with color's fer-
vency.

The day encompasses eternity! The uni-
verse

Of stars and spheres incomparable
Are toys of hand! I toss Capella carelessly
And dance with Virgo at the Dragon's
mouth;

Astride Camelopard we scatter flowers
Upon the Milky-way and fill the Dippers
At Aquarius' fountain!

No heat is vexing and no cold avails

Continued

To still the heart's persistency of song,
Or stay the ardor of the love outlasting
time!

Then I must wake again upon the world
To find the unrest of the dreams of kings!
And I am sad—and will the Night to
come

That knows no end! But,
Here are homely tasks for every hour,
And there---my gray-gowned books
That wove the fancies! So my creed is
born—

And I am comforted as with a prayer:---
*The After-world is builded large
Of little symbols gathered here!*
And I could gladly live on earth—
In child-like wisdom---yet to know more
wonders;
And in patient service---thus to grow
More weary for the *Larger Dream!*

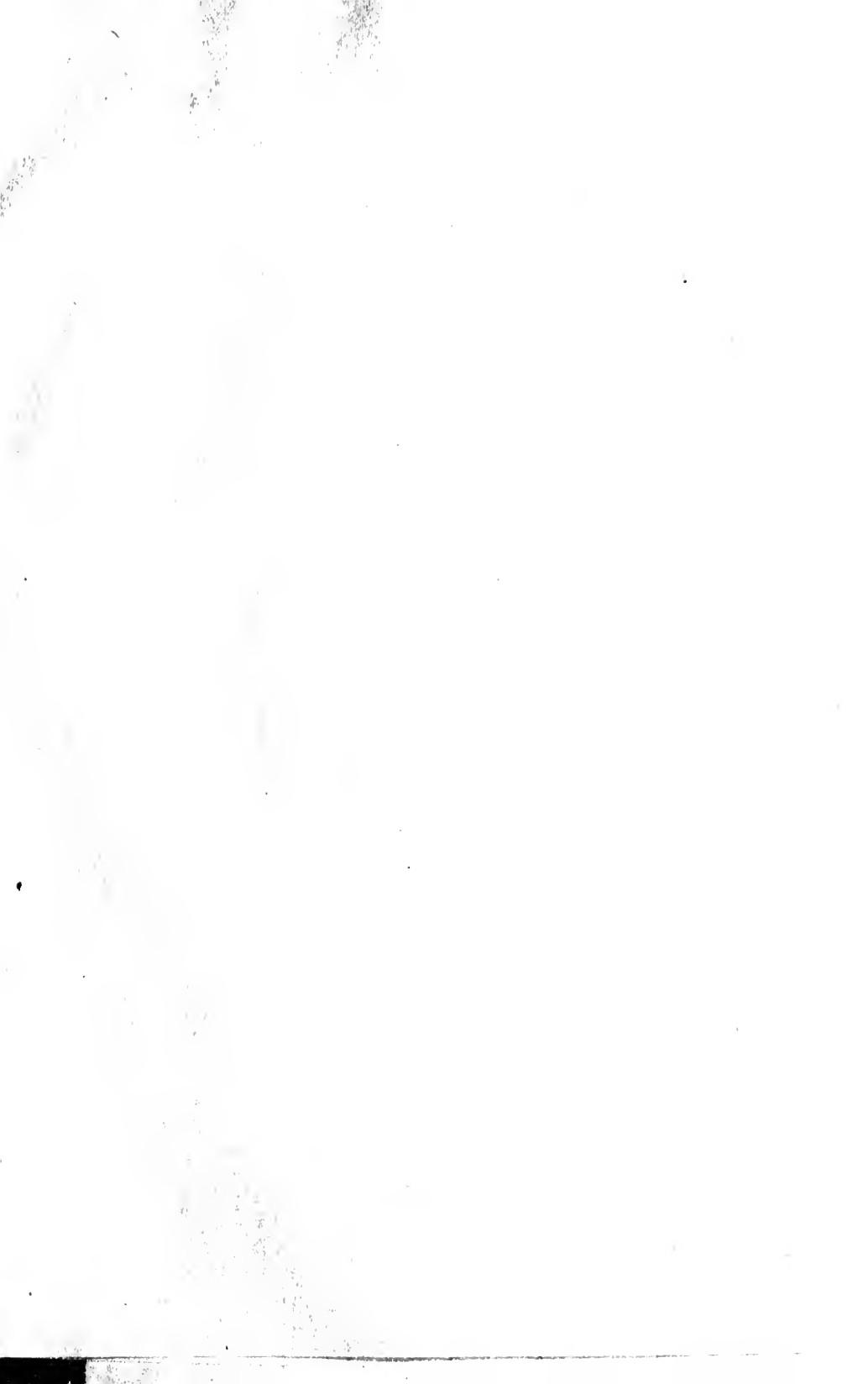
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THE AUTHOR.

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